

Gustavus Disposal & Recycling Center (DRC) Quarterly Staff Report
Paul Berry, DRC Manager/ Operator
Monday, August 10th, 2020

My last quarterly report was at the May 11^h General Meeting. My next quarterly report is scheduled for the November 9th General Meeting.

General Operations and Management

Labor

There have been no changes in the makeup of the DRC labor pool since my last report. Saturdays and Tuesdays remain two operator days even with the slower season but Thursdays have been changed to a one operator day with myself available to help out during any exceptionally busy times. In September the DRC will transition back to Saturday's being the only two operator days.

I have had an issue with one of the Pool staff not wanting to fully follow the City's CY20-20 mask resolution or DRC mask policy. That member of the staff is now working reduced hours and will no longer be working in the Scale House when customers are present or until the City's mandatory mask order has ended.

Glass pulverizer maintenance

With a slower summer, staff was able to do some important maintenance work on the glass pulverizer. I would like to thank Chris Smith for volunteering to apply harder (with a special welding machine) to some of the glass pulverizer's high wear surfaces.

Having local welders that are available and willing to help keep the DRC's equipment running is something very important to our operation. I would also like to thank Ponch Marchbanks for doing some welding repairs on our large CRAM-A-LOT baler last summer. I had neglected to thank him as part of my August report last year.

COVID-19 impacts

As mentioned in my last report I have been comparing monthly weight totals between an average of 2018 and 2019 weights to 2020 weights. Noticeable changes started to occur in March. Please see the table below:

Month	% reduction from the 2018 & 2019 average
March	21%
April	9%
May	40%
June	62%

In my November report I will have data for the full summer season. Basically this June's waste level was about the same as a pre-COVID April. The public has continued to respond well to our one car at a time policy. The Operators have also preferred this policy as well as it keeps things more controlled in the Scale House. As stated in the last report, once the City lifts COVID-19 restrictions the DRC will continue to regulate the number of cars coming into the facility but will set things up so that up to two or possibly three cars can be unloading at one time.

The compost scene

Not having Glacier Bay Lodge's food waste flowing into our composting operation this summer has reduced the scale of our composting operation. This of course will result in less compost for next spring. However, there was additional compost from last fall that did not have enough time to mature and be a part of this spring's sale that will be blended with this summer's material. So hopefully there will be an adequate quantity of compost available for next spring's sale.

The waste mound

An upside to the reduction in the amount of waste flowing into the DRC as a result of the COVID-19 crises, has been that the mound is growing at a slower rate. The periodic burial of the balefill with topsoil, usually a losing situation in a normal summer, has been easier now and staff has been able to properly bury all of last summer's and this past winter's bales.

New scale house software

The transition to the new Trash Flow software occurred on Wednesday, July 1st and has gone pretty well. I have trained the Pool on how to properly use the new software, developed a manual for typical tasks and am dealing with the occasional odd issues that come up in the process. Trash Flow has 24/7 support so any operator can contact them and have the support staff remote-in to our computer and work with the Operator to resolve any problems or explain a given task.

The next step in this upgrade process is to set-up the Treasurer with remote access to our Trash Flow database to allow her to be able see account balances and/or manage billing.

Submission of the City's 5 year solid waste permit renewal with ADEC

On July 14th I submitted all the permit renewal documents to Trisha Bower, our current ADEC Solid Waste Program Environmental Program Specialist. Trisha and other individuals have already asked to use our General Operations and Food Waste Composting plans as examples to be used by other communities seeking to improve their solid waste, food waste composting and recycling programs.

Community Chest

Of all the DRC's operations, without a doubt the Chest has been the one most effected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The City closed the Chest in mid-March and it has not reopened since (though there have been a few, by appointment, sales for individual customers in the interim). The Chest's main building, which is the core of the operation, was designed to have maximum retail space, so the isles are narrow. Because of the narrow isles and the style of construction used in the building, the facility has poor air circulation – this is not the best environment for preventing the spread of an airborne disease. While I would like to see the Chest reopen in September, that will be a challenge and there will have to be some changes first. A Plexiglas and flexible plastic barrier has been installed in the opening between the office where the sales person is and the area where the customer stand. There may be a shelf removal to open up the main entry way and allow for more space between customer and sales staff. I would like to clean and repaint the floor and install an out-swinging front door. I have also purchased a garage style tent to help with outdoor sales.

The biggest change will be in having one individual or family group in the store at one time. This will make for a much slower customer throughput in the store. Instead of the Chest being open twice a week for 2 – 3 hours each time, the Chest would be open on Saturdays only for up to five hours. Further, masks will be required by both staff and customers who wish to shop at the Chest until such a time that the Council lifts the mask mandate.

Unfortunately the City policy requiring the use of face masks in City facilities has triggered the resignation of our long-time primary volunteer at the Chest, Betsy Lesh. I am saddened

by her resignation and will greatly miss her efforts. The only thing I wish to say about the now highly political mask debate is, that in these situations where individuals take a non-negotiable position - there are no winners, we all lose something.

Solid Waste Management and Facility Planing Process (“SWMP”)

I have not made any progress on this front since my last report.

Capital Project Summaries

New Composting Facility/ Quonset replacement

Project description:

As described in previous reports, the objective of this project is to replace the failing Quonset structure with a properly engineered and more robust composting facility capable of processing greater amounts of material in a more temperature controlled way than our current operation does.

Project status:

As you will all recall I had worked with O2 Composting Systems & Training, Terra Construction & Design and Timberline Engineering to come up with a good set of plans for a new facility complete with an engineer’s stamp. The project went out to bid in May and the one bid received was over \$50,000 above what was available to the project. Due to financial limitations the City is experiencing during the COVID-19 crises and the high cost of the facility considering the amount of material to be processed in it on an annual basis, I decided it is best to go back to the drawing board and come up with something that is less expensive but still accomplishes all the goals of the project.

I have not been able to come up with a replacement project for this summer’s construction season so I am focusing on having something together by next spring.

In-flow Storage Area Project

More information about the purpose of this storage area can be found in earlier reports or in the DRC’s General Operations Plan.

Project Status:

Fairweather Construction completed their work on the project in mid-May and we have been moving into the new storage area during the course of the summer. It is very nice having adequate room to store the materials we recycle and to have the material located so close to the main building.

The next phase of this project is to install 8’ chain-link fencing around the storage area. I have selected chain-link that has integral brown colored slating to act as a visual barrier so that what is stored in the in-flow storage area will be hidden from the view along Boat Harbor Road. I hope to have the fencing project completed before my next report to the Council.

Household Hazardous Waste Facility

No change since my last report

This project is the purchase of a 20’ long x 8’ wide & 8’ high container designed for household hazardous waste storage. The unit includes spill containment, ventilation, shelving, and signage. The proposed container will be fully-constructed at a facility in the lower 48 and is ready to use upon arrival in Gustavus.

Project Status:

The funds for the purchase of this unit have been awarded by the Council. Now that the In-flow storage area project is complete, which includes an area for the unit, I will be going over the specifications and will be developing a list of at least three vendors that I will solicit quotes from. Shipping costs have changed since I last went over the costs for this project and I will need to ensure that we can get the new facility here and set up within the project's budget.

New Building

No change since my last report

The end, thank you.
08/05/20

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